

CLAIMS:

What is claimed is:

1. A method comprising:

packaging an installation program for use in installing a software application; and
streaming the installation program to a target processing system over a network
to cause the installation program to configure the target processing system for
execution of the software application.

2. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein said streaming the installation program to
the target processing system comprises using the installation program in a streaming
mode to create user-specific information on the target processing system, the user-
specific information for subsequent use by the software application when the software
application is executed on the target processing system in the streaming mode.

3. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein said streaming the installation program to a
target processing system over a network to cause the installation program to configure
the target processing system for execution of the software application comprises
causing the target system to be configured for streaming the software application.

4. A method as recited in claim 3, further comprising streaming the software application
from a host processing system to the target processing system over the network.

5. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein said streaming the installation program
comprises:

identifying portions of the installation program that need to be downloaded to the target processing system;

downloading the portions of the installation program to the target processing system; and

executing the installation program on the target processing system using only said portions.

6. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising, prior to streaming the installation program, packaging the installation program into a form which facilitates streaming of the installation program.

7. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the installation program comprises a dummy installation package, application information and a database, the database containing the software application and indicating a segmenting of the software application.

8. A method comprising:

downloading, to a client over a network, only portions of an installation program, the installation program for use to install a software application on a computer system, wherein the software application resides on a server;

using only said downloaded portions of the installation program on the client to configure the client to execute the software application, including identifying portions of the software application that are to be download to the client;

downloading only said portions of the software application from the server to the client; and

executing the software application on the client using only said portions of the software application downloaded to the client.

9. A method as recited in claim 8, wherein the installation program comprises a dummy installation package, application information and a database, the database containing the software application and indicating a segmenting of the software application.

10. A method comprising:

packaging an installation program in a form that facilitates streaming of the installation program to a target processing system, the installation program for use in installing a software application; and

streaming the installation program to the target processing system to cause the target processing system to be configured to execute the software application.

11. A method as recited in claim 9, wherein said streaming the installation program to the target processing system comprises using the installation program in a streaming mode to create user-specific information on the target processing system, the user-specific information for subsequent use by the software application when the software application is executed on the target processing system in the streaming mode.

12. A method as recited in claim 9, wherein said streaming the installation program to the target processing system comprises streaming the installation program to the target processing system to cause the target processing system to be configured to execute the software application in a streaming mode.

13. A method as recited in claim 9, wherein the installation program comprises a dummy installation package, application information and a database, the database containing the software application and indicating a segmenting of the software application.

14. A method of creating a streaming installation package, the method comprising:
inputting a non-streaming installation package for use in installing a software application on a target system, the non-streaming installation package including a plurality of files;

identifying all of the plurality of files in the non-streaming installation package;

classifying each of the plurality of files according to file type;

creating a dummy installation package that includes a plurality of dummy files representing the plurality of files, based on said file types; and

creating the streaming installation package from the dummy installation package.

15. A method as recited in claim 14, wherein the non-streaming installation package conforms to an installation standard.

16. A method as recited in claim 14, wherein the streaming installation package further includes application information and a database, wherein the database contains the software application and indicates a segmenting of the application.

17. A method as recited in claim 14, wherein the streaming installation package is configured to be streamed to a target system to configure the target system for execution of a software application in a streaming mode.

18. A method of creating a streaming installation package, to be streamed to a target system to configure the target system for execution of a software application in a streaming mode, the method comprising:

inputting a non-streaming installation package for use in installing the software application, the non-streaming installation package including a plurality of files, including a set of one or more archive files;

extracting the archive files from the non-streaming installation package;

creating a list of all of the files in the non-streaming installation package;

creating a list of streamlets for all of the files in the non-streaming installation package;

classifying each of the files in the non-streaming installation package as belonging to either a first type or a second type, the first type representing all of the files in the non-streaming installation package which are normally installed on a system for purposes of installing the software application, the second type representing all of the files in the non-streaming installation package which are not of the first type;

for each file of the first type which is not an archive file, creating a dummy file of the same size with a special header and nullifying all of the other files of the first type;

creating a dummy archive file for any files of the first type which are contained in an archive file;

creating a dummy installation package including each said dummy file, each said dummy archive file, and each said file of the second type; and

creating the streaming installation package to include the dummy installation package, application information and a database, wherein the database contains the software application and indicates a segmenting of the application into streamlets, and

wherein the application information represents only the files of the second type in the dummy installation package.

19. A machine-readable storage medium storing a software installation package which, when streamed to a target system over a network, configures the target system for streaming execution of a software application associated with the installation package.

20. A method as recited in claim 19, wherein the non-streaming installation package conforms to an installation standard.

21. A machine-readable storage medium as recited in claim 20, wherein the installation package comprises a dummy installation package, application information and a database, the database containing the software application and indicating a segmenting of the software application.

22. An apparatus comprising:

means for packaging an installation program in a form that facilitates streaming of the installation program to a target processing system, the installation program for use in installing a software application; and

means for streaming the installation program to the target processing system to cause the target processing system to be configured to execute the software application.

23. An apparatus as recited in claim 22, wherein said means for streaming the installation program to the target processing system comprises means for using the installation program in a streaming mode to create user-specific information on the

target processing system, the user-specific information for subsequent use by the software application when the software application is executed on the target processing system in the streaming mode.

24. An apparatus as recited in claim 23, wherein the means for streaming the installation program to the target processing system comprises means for streaming the installation program to the target processing system to cause the target processing system to be configured to execute the software application in a streaming mode.